SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION
BULLETIN

VOL. 3 **SEPTEMBER, 1936** No. 4

TAHITI (Te Raau Rahi), *by Paul Gauguin.* Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Walter S. Brewster.

The Gauguin Exhibition

By DR. GRACE L. MCCANN MORLEY

So much has been written of Paul Gauguin, eccentric painter of the South Pacific, so much stress has been placed upon the work of his last period that the complete Gauguin, gifted artist of slow and solid development, has been largely overlooked. Such a chronological exhibition as is now on view, until October 4, at the San Francisco Museum of Art, includes examples of successive phases of the painter's evolution. It presents the later decorative work, which is most familiar in its proper relation to the fine earlier canvases. As a result Gauguin appears as a much finer artist than is usually recognized and his work takes on its full importance as one of the main sources of contemporary tendencies in art.

The paintings in the exhibition, gathered mainly from private collections in this country with additional loans from museums and galleries, are of uniform excellent quality. They demonstrate that Gauguin was an able and workmanlike painter long before he left Europe. While he was still profoundly influenced by Impressionism he had achieved a distinction of style and an individual place that would make him an important contributor to this group, had he developed no farther. Though the pointillist *Still Life* from the Chester Dale Collection, done in

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The Association's Organization and Responsibilities

By Worth Ryder

Is it not the logical moment for the San Francisco Art Association to orient itself with regard to new and enlarged horizons, to turn its eyes inward towards its own organization and to remove what may be obsolete in its present form?

A great exposition will spring suddenly in our midst—surrounding municipalities are about to be brought into the heart of the city by the new Bay Bridges—and responsibilities concerning this Exposition and the extended boundaries of the city (obscure as they may now appear) will rest inevitably on the Association. Is the Association ready to meet them?

The Art Association is now seeking to increase its membership and if it is to be powerful in the community it must have a large and active support. This will come when it has a well-defined extra mural policy and a logical internal organization. We, as members of the Association, might ask ourselves a few questions in order to find out what is not clear:

1. Who shapes the policy of each of the various museums and is the Association's relationship to the museums satisfactory?
2. To what extent does the Association influence the city planning?
3. What responsibilities do the artists assume towards the general good of the Association?
4. What is the policy for nomination and the election of officers?
5. In what hands lie the power to dictate educational policies and personnel of the school?

These and many similar questions are asked but few persons seem to know the answers.

The major interests of the Association at present seem to be the operation of the School of Fine Arts and the sponsoring of two major exhibitions at the Museum of Art in the Veterans' Memorial Building. Its active support is needed obviously at every stage in the development of these two activities. But it cannot end there. Its participation is imperative in the general cultural evolution of the city and the entire Bay area.

Chicago's Art Association has great power in its city and in the Middle West because its organization and its activities are defined and clear. It has focus. We need that here. I suggest that committees be appointed to study both the outside relationships and the inner form and to report means of improvement.

Concerning the inner activities of the Association I offer the following suggestions for your attention and discussion. They are answers to dissatisfactions one hears among the artists. Changes of this sort might serve to remove the dissatisfactions and contribute to the new form of a strong organization.

ASSOCIATION ORGANIZATION

1. Make a new nominating procedure for the election of officers.
2. Elect a Committee on Committees.
3. Permit groups of members to hold meetings outside of San Francisco and allow representatives of such groups to vote for, and otherwise represent their groups at general Association meetings in San Francisco.
4. Permit balloting by mail.

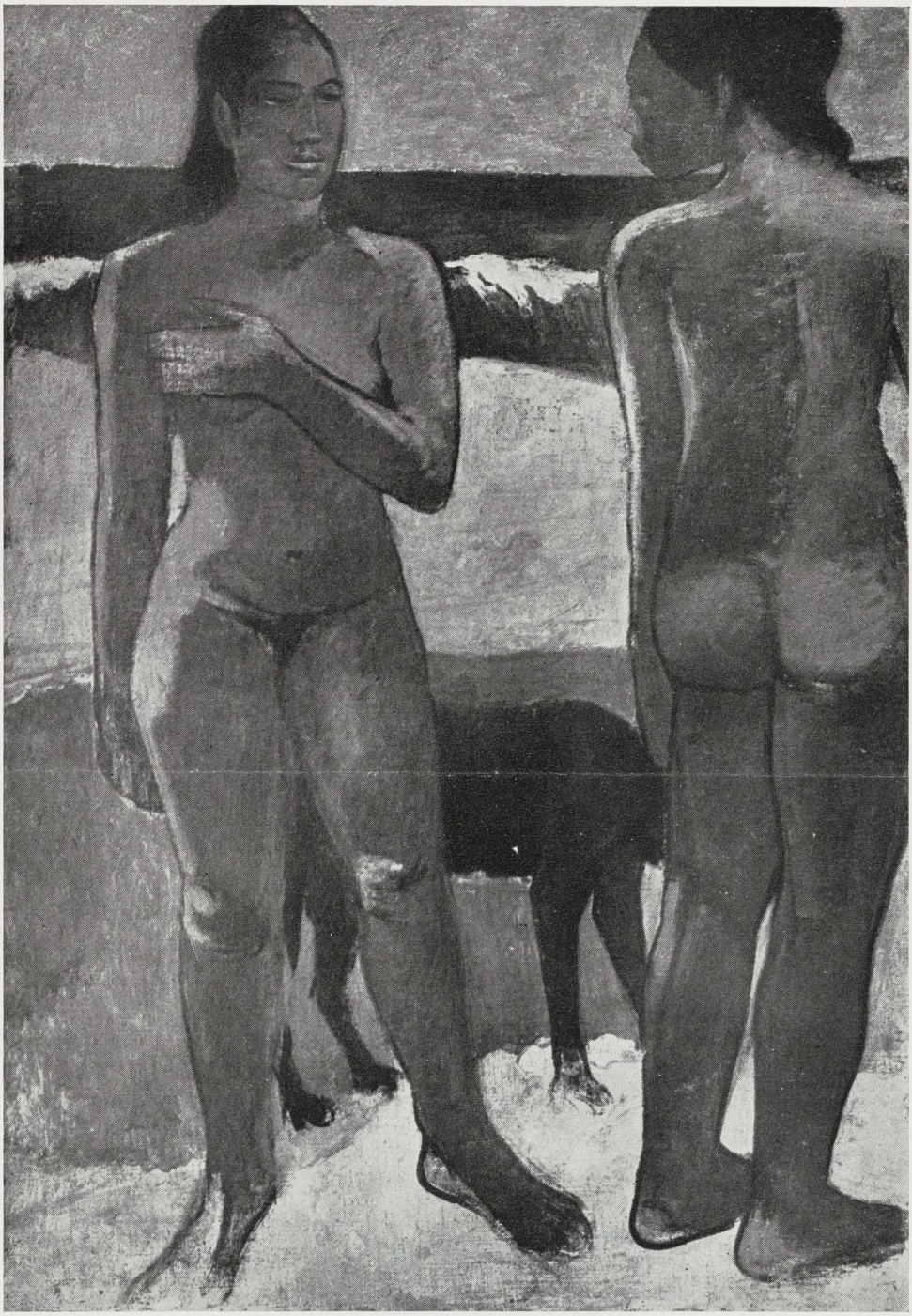
ARTISTS' COUNCIL

1. Revise the jury system. Suggested changes:
   a. Appoint a jury of nine members, three to be selected from each of three groups.
   b. Vote to be taken without voiced argumentation.

(This system has been in use in the Oakland Art Gallery for many years. A voting machine was invented and perfected by Mr. Clapp, the director, which has worked out with signal success. His jury consists of three members chosen from each of the three groups "Radical," "Conservative," "Intermediate." In spite of the incongruous classification this system seems to have wiped out all ill feeling among the artists against juries. Having acted upon this jury I can recommend that the Oakland system be given an investigation.)

2. Revise the conduct of major exhibitions. Suggested changes:
   a. Allocate galleries at the spring exhibition to special groups (i. e., Southern California Group, North Pacific Coast Group, Abstract Painters, etc.), each group to jury and hang its own pictures, to be responsible for the looks of its gallery and the cost of its catalog.
   b. Establish a jury free room at this exhibition, the object being to bring out unknown artists and students. Charge for the space, limit the number and do not make these pictures eligible for prizes.
3. Money prizes to be reserved for Association members.

What are your ideas? The Board of Directors and the Artist Council can use constructive criticism. They are eager to increase the Association's membership and they expect your assistance if the Association is to become a still more potent power in the West. Written suggestions are best. If sent to Mrs. Adair, Secretary of the San Francisco Art Association, Chestnut Street, San Francisco, they will reach the proper committees for analysis and action.



NUDES, *by Paul Gauguin*. Lent by the Honolulu Academy of Arts.
Now showing at San Francisco Museum of Art.

Juries Chosen for Water-Color Show

The jury of selection for the Art Association's Second Annual Water-Color Show was elected at the meeting of the Artist Members of the Association, as follows:

Jose Moya Del Pino, *Chairman*; William Gaw, Marian Simpson, H. Oliver Albright, Jane Berlandina; alternate, Florence Tufts.

The jury of awards is composed of Jose Moya Del Pino, *Chairman*; Ralph Stackpole, Marian Simpson; alternate, Gottardo Piazzoni.

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Send material for Bulletin to San Francisco Art Association, Chestnut and Jones Streets, by 20th of each month.

Editorial

On page 2 of this issue is printed an article by Worth Ryder, recently received. It discusses many problems that confront the Art Association and contains recommendations for the development of our Bay Area as an Art Center.

We trust that the membership will peruse it carefully and act upon Mr. Ryder's suggestion to analyze the situation that confronts the Art Association and endeavor to assist in the practical solution of these problems.

However, ideas and written suggestions, valuable as they are, fall short of their purpose unless backed by a willingness to carry them through to a conclusion. This means personal effort, time taken from one's own work! It means the conscientious attendance at the meetings that are held for this very purpose and which are consistently neglected by the majority of the artists that comprise our Association.

The Artists' Council is composed of fifteen members elected for the purpose of carrying on artists' affairs and seven members of the Board of Directors chosen to represent the artist membership on that body.

Of the fifteen men and women elected to the Council a bare minority appear with regularity at the meetings and the artist members of the Board are usually represented at Council meetings by one member who alone seems to appreciate the importance of her position.

We would suggest that at the coming elections due this Fall that the artists of the Art Association demand that the machinery, already established, be utilized and that any member of the Council or artist member of our Board of Directors who fails to appear at meetings of the Council for three consecutive times be dropped and replaced by persons who will assume the obligations that these positions impose. Only then can the Art Association properly function and only then will these fine suggestions of Mr. Ryder's be worth our consideration! —M. R.

* * *

A course of ten illustrated lectures by Jane Berlandina (Mrs. Henry Howard) on the History of French Painting of the Nineteenth Century, from David to Cézanne, are being given every Tuesday afternoon from 4 to 5 o'clock in the Lecture Room of the School, 800 Chestnut Street.

$5.00 for course; 75c single lectures.

New Members, San Francisco Art Association

LAY MEMBERS

Mr. B. H. Brainerd, Jr.; Mrs. Herbert E. Clayburgh, Mr. C. M. Weatherwax.

ACTIVE ARTISTS

Mrs. Lulu Hawkins Braghetta, Mr. Rexford Brandt, Mr. John F. Greathead, Mr. John Haley, Mr. John Mottram, Mr. Kiyoo Nobuyuki, Mrs. Ina Perham Story, Mr. Farwell Taylor.

ASSOCIATE ARTISTS

Mrs. Frederick M. Braddock, Mr. Albert J. Evers, Miss Beatrice Lee, Miss Bernita Lundy.

* * *

At the last meeting of the Artists' Council, held September 2nd, an invitation was extended to members of the Alumni Association, California School of Fine Arts, to join the Art Association as Associate or Active Artist Members. This will provide a stimulus to the younger artists of our community and establishes a natural fusion between the School, the Art Association and the Museum.

* * *

The Art of Lyonel Feininger

By ALFRED NEUMEYER

The following are excerpts from a lecture by Dr. Neumeyer. The Feininger Exhibition followed the Abstract Show and was one of the best attended exhibitions of the year.

If you have read the newspapers of the past few weeks, you have found the name of Lyonel Feininger connected again and again with the words "modernism," "cubism," and "constructivism." * * *

It is true that Feininger has certain optical methods in common with a large group of modern painters who are more interested in pattern than in realistic representation. But how little does this word "cubism" explain. There are a hundred ways to handle abstract forms, each of them depending on the individuality of the artist.

* * *

Feininger's artistic world is crystal like. The crystal is the most architectonic creation of nature, but it is creation and a part of nature. This is important for the understanding of Feininger's art. It does not offer sur-realistic symbols like Picasso's latest creations of cubism; it is not mechanistically cubistic like the works of Ferdinand Léger; it is like the crystal; a transforming architectonic medium in the realm of nature. One part belongs to light and space, one part to matter and the plane. In speaking of Feininger's line, we have used the word "bizarre," in speaking of crystals, we must use the word "pure." This is one of the fascinating and convincing tensions in his art, the fact that the

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The Gauguin Exhibition

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1889, illustrates a use of strict Impressionist technique which Gauguin seldom tried, the early Breton canvases and the landscape painted in Martinique exemplify a striving for the effects of light, distances and atmosphere typical of the school. At the same time he was finding for himself a more decorative style as in the *Potato Field* lent by the Marie Harriman Gallery and in the *Portrait of Meyer de Haan* lent by Mr. and Mrs. Q. A. Shaw McKean. *Tahiti* (lent by Mr. and Mrs. Walter S. Brewster), painted soon after Gauguin's arrival in the Island on his first trip, has still traces of the Impressionist point of view, though it is primarily the sensitive expression of Gauguin's personality reacting to an environment he found especially sympathetic. The *Nudes,* from the Honolulu Academy of Arts, represents his mature decorative style, perfected before his return to France in 1893. One of the most interesting canvases, from the point of view of the artist's history, is the *Washerwomen* lent by Mrs. Robert McKay, painted in Brittany between the two Tahitian sojourns. It has not the brilliant color of the South Sea canvases, but essentially it is in their manner, with its decorative composition and flat areas of carefully harmonized color. The *Maternity,* from the Adolph Lewisohn Collection, represents superbly the final period of Gauguin's painting—handled with all his skill and especially complete in emotional as in decorative expression.

The prints, for which Gauguin is scarcely less famous in Europe than for his painting, present a complete survey of his work in graphic mediums. Only a dozen minor items are missing, and the important examples are included in many states, variant printings, and rare proofs. The W. A. Russell Allen Collection, most complete in all periods, forms the nucleus of this part of the exhibition, and has been supplemented from other sources to assure completeness. The "zincographs" of 1889 of Breton, Martiniquan and Arlesian subjects demonstrate an early preoccupation with decorative effect, developed to its highest expression in the famous woodcuts of the first Tahitian trip. These are handled in an extremely original and individual manner, not strictly orthodox in technique, but admirably suited to Gauguin's purpose. Those of the second trip are simpler and equally effective in our entirely different style. This part of the exhibition has been installed definitely with the idea of allowing study and comparison. It allows a unique opportunity for studying the development of an important artist in the graphic field.

American Indian Paintings

The current exhibition of paintings by American Indians at the San Francisco Museum of Art is interesting from two points of view: first, as an expression of a gifted people whose work is becoming more and more appreciated and, second, as a record of Indian ceremonial, symbolism, life and costume. The paintings are largely the work of Indians of the Southwest, from Hopi, Navajo, and Kiowa tribes.

The Indian artists have been encouraged to express themselves naturally and directly without imitation of European works. The result is a highly decorative handling, colorful, simplified and individual with much use of old symbolic designs and no realism of setting.

Fine Indian jewelry and beadwork from the collection of Mrs. William Denman and Mrs. Charles de Young Elkus are included.

These are American arts, more authentically a product of this country and more deeply rooted in its older cultures than any other, the work of the Indians themselves, with which every American adult and child should be familiar.

The Art of Lyonel Feininger

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bizarre is not only frozen to crystalline, regular forms, but that it has the character of purity. I mean "purity" in the formal sense as well as in the spiritual one. Something clean, open-minded, and absolutely true can be felt in his artistic world. If there is any criticism of this art, I would say that it is just this lack of human complications; it is this crystalline objectivity which is rather remote from our own existence.

But there is no rule which compels an artist to undertake the task of a Dostoyevski or a Kokoschka, to analyze the problematic aspect of life. Art can just as well be the expression of a never-ending longing for a dreamland of absolute beauty. Sometimes in such creations we feel behind the dream of beauty the suffering soul of its creator trembling like a darker tone, a darker shadow. It is the mystery of Swinburne's perfection, this trembling between the crystalline lines.

Feininger belongs to this group of artists. He is full of longing for a realm of purest beauty, but he gives convincing proof that one can work towards such an aim without the trappings of worn out Romanticism, using rather the modern means of exact architectonic analysis, with the love of engineering and with the spirit of engineering. He is an engineer, or better, an architect in the land of beauty. We feel his enchantment with nature, and we are enchanted with him. We see his spirit asking for a fundamental analysis of complicated reality, and we learn to see with his eyes. He is a true artist and we believe in his art.

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Chicago Exhibition Open to American Artists

The *47th Annual Exhibition* of American Paintings and Sculpture will be held at the Art Institute of Chicago, October 22 to December 6.

Entry cards must be received by Wednesday, September 23rd.

Exhibits must reach the Art Institute between Tuesday, September 29th, and Thursday, October 8th.

Selection is by Jury and by invitation of the Director, Dr. Robert B. Harshe.

Prizes: Five prizes, open to any artist exhibiting, totaling $1,750.00. Various medals and honorable mentions in addition.

Announcement with complete details on file, *Information Desk,* San Francisco Museum of Art.

September Exhibitions in Local Galleries

Art Center—Group Show of Oils by members, including William Hesthal, Moya Del Pino, Dorothy Puccinelli and others. September 21 to October 3rd, Watercolors by Dong Kingman, Hugh Littlejohn, Frede Vidar, and others.

Amberg-Hirth—Modern handcraft, including ceramics, textiles, jewelry.

Courvoisier—480 Post Street: Oils by American Painters to September 19. September 21-October 3, Watercolors by Millard Sheets.

California Palace of the Legion of Honor, Lincoln Park, San Francisco: Paintings by Old and Modern Masters. Lent by the Hatfield and Lilienfeld Galleries, September 1st through September 19th. California Paintings—Past and Present—through September.

Gump's, 246 Post Street: September 21 to October 10, Exhibition of works by Jerome Blum of New York.

M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco: An Exhibition of Camera Studies, through September 21st. Pre-Columbian Collection from Philadelphia, Costa Rica and Cannon Island. Collected and lent by Dr. Jose B. Gonzales, through September 27th. Fifth International Exhibition of Lithography and Wood Engraving. (Assembled by the Art Institute of Chicago.) Opening September 24th.

San Francisco Museum of Art, Civic Center: Paintings and Prints by Paul Gauguin, through October 4. Oriental Rugs, through October 31. American Indian Exhibition, through October 18. *Coming Exhibitions*—Selected showing from Duncan Phillips Collection, October 5. Annual Exhibition San Francisco Society of Women Artists. Opening October 29.

Oakland Art Gallery—Oils by John Burnside Tufts. Water Colors by Florence Tufts.

FREE LECTURES

San Francisco Museum of Art

September 4—Friday Evening—*Gauguin Exhibition,* Preview, opening at eight o'clock.

September 6—Sunday Afternoon—*Gauguin Exhibition,* Grace L. McCann Morley, 3 p. m.

September 7—Holiday hours—Labor Day, 1-5.

September 9—Holiday hours—Admission Day, 1-5.

September 10—Thursday Evening—*Tour of Rug Exhibition,* John Stanton Brookes, 8 p. m.

September 13—Sunday Afternoon—*Gauguin Exhibition,* Claudia Davis, 3 p. m.

September 14—Monday Afternoon—*Gauguin Exhibition,* Claudia Davis, 2:30 p. m.

September 16—Wednesday Evening—*Gauguin Trails in Tahiti,* Hamilton Wolf, 8 p. m.

September 17—Thursday Evening—*Children in Art,* Margaret Erwin Schevill, 8 p. m.

September 20—Sunday Afternoon—*Paul Gauguin and Vincent Van Gogh,* Lucien Labaudt, 3 p. m.

September 21—Monday Afternoon—*the Gauguin Prints,* John Humphrey, 3 p. m.

September 23—Wednesday Evening—*The South Seas as a Background for Gauguin's Art,* Clifford Gessler, 8 p. m.

September 24—Thursday Evening—*Tour of Gauguin Exhibition,* Jack Stanton Brookes, 8 p. m.

September 27—Sunday Afternoon—*Gauguin and Impressionism,* Katherine Field Caldwell, 3 p. m.

September 28—Monday Afternoon—*Oriental Rugs,* Alice Putnam Breuer, 3 p. m.

September 30—Wednesday Evening—*Indian Exhibition,* Laura Adams Armer, 8 p. m.